REMARKS

Claims 1-7; 9, 11-18; and 20-26 are amended.

Applicants' amended claims are directed to a system and method for ablating tissue within a body. Energy is transmitted into the tissue to be ablated by means of an energy transmitting region on a guide element. The energy can be transmitted from the region in either of two general transmission modes. First, the region can be operated as a zone of uniform polarity and the energy transmitted to a remotely located indifferent electrode. Alternatively, the region can be subdivided into zones of alternating polarity and the energy transmitted between such zones. Selection between the two general transmission modes is accomplished electronically.

As amended, it is believed that the pending claims comply fully with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. Section 112 and that the various items of indefiniteness helpfully pointed out by the Examiner have been obviated.

As amended, it is also believed that the pending claims are allowable over the cited references.

None of the cited references disclose the concept of electronically configuring a tissue ablation system for energy transmission in either a unipolar mode (i.e., energy transmission from the transmitting region to a remotely located indifferent electrode) or a bipolar mode (i.e., energy transmission between oppositely polarized zones defined in the energy transmitting region).

Kittrell et al., teach the use of laser energy transmitted along a plurality of optical fibers in the surgical treatment of disease. In Kittrell et al., various ones of the optical fibers are independently energized with laser energy as needed to remove tissue. In all cases, the energy that is released propagates substantially straight ahead like a beam of light. Kittrell et al., do not disclose the concept of changing the polarity of various zones in an energy transmitting region and, in fact, would have no reason to do so as such polarization would have no influence on the propagation of the optical wavelength energy that is released by the Kittrell et al., device.

Walinsky et al., disclose a catheter ablation method and apparatus wherein suboptical electromagnetic energy is released from a single antenna into tissue to be ablated. Unlike in Applicants' system and method as claimed, Walinsky et al., make no provision for electronically configuring their energy transmitting region into zones of differing polarity. Walinsky et al., make no provision for electronically selecting between a unipolar transmitting mode and a bipolar transmitting mode.

Gelinas et al., disclose an endocardial electrode that is used for cardiac monitoring rather

than tissue ablation. Gelinas et al., provide multiple electrodes that can be monitored relative to each other in various combinations so as to map electrical activity within the heart. Gelinas t al., are not concerned with ablating tissue within the heart or elsewhere and make no teaching or suggestion that their device be used for such a purpose.

Only Applicants teach the concept of electronically configuring a transmitting region in a tissue ablating system for selective transmission in both unipolar and bipolar modes. As defined by their amended claims, Applicants' system and method provides for electronic selection of operation in either of these modes. Such operation and selection are neither shown nor suggested by the cited references. Favorable consideration of Applicants' amended claims is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

By_____
Philip P. Mann
Registration No. 30,960

RYAN, MAKI, MANN & HOHENFELDT, S.C.
633 West Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203
(414) 271-6555
January 26, 1996
529354a.ppm